

Message Text

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ACTION LAB-04

INFO OCT-01 ARA-14 ISO-00 SIL-01 /020 W
-----081929 230618Z /20

R 222135Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8144
INFO AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

UNCLAS SAN SALVADOR 2541

DEPT PLEASE PASS TO DEPT OF LABOR - ILAB - FOR ERNEST DIXON

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ELAB ES
SUBJ: DEPARTMENT OF LABOR OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH SEMINAR

REF: STATE 114255

1. DURING THEIR CONSULTATIONS MAY 15-19 TO DEVELOP INDUSTRIAL SAFETY SEMINAR, DOL OFFICIALS ERNEST DIXON AND ADAN FIGUEROA, ACCOMPANIED BY LABOR OFFICER, MET WITH MINLABOR, SUBSECRETARY OF LABOR, DIRECTOR GENERAL OF MINISTRY OF LABOR, THE CHIEF OF THE NATIONAL DEPARTMENT OF HYGIENE AND OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY, AND OTHER OFFICIALS. DIXON AND FIGUEROA ALSO HAD THE CHANCE TO VISIT PLANT SITES AND WORK PLACES IN SAN SALVADOR, ACAJUTLA, AND OTHER PARTS OF THE COUNTRY.

2. IN A SESSION AT THE MINISTRY OF LABOR ON MAY 19, DIXON AND FIGUEROA POINTED OUT WHAT THEY CONSIDERED THE DEFICIENCIES IN EL SALVADOR'S OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY PROGRAMS. AMONG THESE DEFICIENCIES THEY LISTED: SLOWNESS OF PROCESS FOR LEVYCCG FINES FOR INFRACTIONS; NEED TO ESTABLISH PRIORITIES IN OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY BECAUSE OF MINISTRY'S LIMITED RESOURCES IN THIS FIELD; LACK OF PERSONNEL IN LABORATORY TO TEST FOR HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCES; LACK OF PERSONNEL IN OFFICE OF SAFETY AND HYGIENE (ONLY EIGHT ALTOGETHER);
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AND OUTDATED EQUIPMENT. AMONG RECOMMENDATIONS GIVEN BY DOL OFFICIALS WERE: TO CONDUCT A SURVEY OF WHERE THERE IS HIGHEST INCIDENCE OF ACCIDENTS IN ORDER TO BETTER ESTABLISH PRIORITIES; TO LOOK INTO THE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING A JOINT LABORATORY WITH OTHER GOES MINISTRIES; TO PROVIDE PROTECTIVE GEAR FOR SAFETY AND HEALTH INSPECTORS (SAFETY SHOES, EYE GOGGLES, ETC.)

3. MINISTRY OFFICIALS THANKED DIXON AND FIGUEROA FOR THEIR ASSESSMENT AND ASKED IF IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO HAVE COPIES OF OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH ADMINISTRATION (OSHA) STANDARDS IN VARIOUS INDUSTRIES SENT DOWN TO THEM AS WELL AS A LIST OF U.S. MANUFACTURERS OF SAFETY AND TESTING EQUIPMENT. IN TERMS OF THE SEMINAR ITSELF, THE OFFICIALS SAID THAT THEY WOULD LIKE IT TO START IN SEPTEMBER 1978, TO LAST ONE MONTH, AND TO BE MADE UP OF THREE OR FOUR TECHNICAL EXPERTS WHO WOULD KNOW HOW TO APPROACH PROBLEMS AS LAID OUT BY DOL OFFICIALS. THEY ASKED IF IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO HAVE THESE EXPERTS BRING DEMONSTRATION TECHNICAL EQUIPMENT AND TO CONCENTRATE IN THE AREAS OF SAFETY AND HEALTH PROBLEMS IN CONSTRUCTION, TEXTILES, GENERAL INDUSGRY AND AGRICULTURE (SPECIFICALLY THE USE AND CONTROL OF PESTICIDES).

4. THESE SAME OFFICIALS HAD PREVIOUSLY INDICATED THAT THEY WOULD PREFER THE SEMINAR TO BE CONDUCTED ON A GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT LEVEL (INSTEAD OF ALSO BEING MADE UP OF INDUSTRY AND LABOR REPRESENTATIVES). THEY SAID THAT IT WAS THEIR HOPE THAT AS A RESULT OF THE SEMINAR, THE MINISTRY'S OWN CAPABILITIES IN MONITORING OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH WOULD BE INCREASED. THEY ALSO STATED THEY WOULD LIKE THIS SEMINAR TO BE THE FIRST OF A SERIES OF SEMINARS THAT COULD LATER BE UNCLASSIFIED

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EXTENDED TO COVER THE PROBLEMS OF SPECIFIC INDUSTRIES. FINALLY, THEY WERE IN HOPES THAT AFTER PARTICULAR PROBLEM AREAS WERE IDENTIFIED, THEY MIGHT RECEIVE TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE FUNDED FROM USG SOURCES TO ALLEVIATE THESE PROBLEMS.

5. COMMENT: THE SESSIONS WITH THE MINISTRY OF LABOR OFFICIALS WERE CONSTRUCTIVE, WITH FULL DISCUSSION OF ALL POINTS RAISED. MINISTER OF LABOR SHOWED HIS PERSONAL INTEREST BY HOLDING WORKING LUNCH AS THE INAGURAL SESSION FOR THE TALKS. END COMMENT.

6. ACTION REQUESTED: EMBASSY WOULD APPRECIATE RECEIVING FOR TRANSMITTAL TO THE MINISTRY OF LABOR, COPIES OF OSHA STANDARDS IN VARIOUS INDUSTRIES (PARTICULARLY IN CONSTRUCTION, TEXTILES, GENERAL INDUSTRY, AND USE AND CONTROL OF PESTICIDES AND OTHER PROBLEM AREAS IN AGRICULTURE) AND LISTS OF U.S. MANUFACTURERS OF SAFETY AND TESTING EQUIPMENT.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY, HEALTH, SEMINARS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 22 may 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: n/a
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment:
Disposition Date: 01 jan 1960
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978SANS02541
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780216-0587
Format: TEL
From: SAN SALVADOR
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780533/aaaabbkf.tel
Line Count: 114
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 54b70799-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION LAB
Original Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: n/a
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 78 STATE 114255
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 29 mar 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: N/A
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2615197
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEPARTMENT OF LABOR OCCUPATIONAL SAFETY AND HEALTH SEMINAR
TAGS: ELAB, ES, (DIXON, ERNEST), (FIGUEROA, ADAN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/54b70799-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014